

FEBRUARY 2005

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DRIVER'S LICENSE GETS A MAKEOVER

NEW FEATURES HELP DETER IDENTIFY THEFT

THE REDESIGNED MINNESOTA DRIVER'S license, instruction permit and identification card are now available at Bloomington's Motor Vehicle Office, 9930 Logan Avenue South. Many of the cards' new features help deter identify theft and fraud including fine lines over the cardholder's image, larger print and a red border that identifies cardholders under age 21. Production of the new cards began in December 2004. Because the card is issued every four years, old and new versions of the driver's license will be in circulation for the next several years .

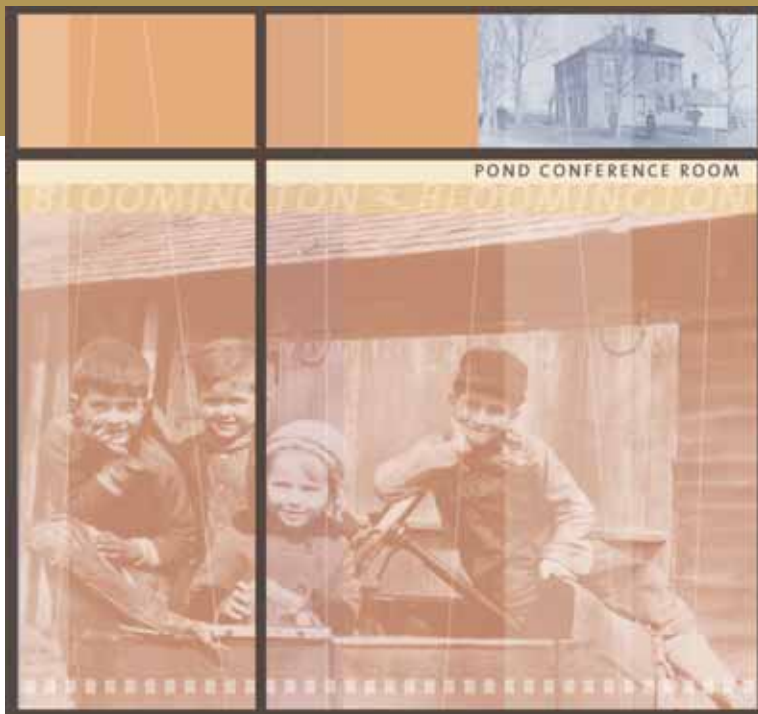
Other services available at Motor Vehicle include passport application and photos, license tab renewal and title transfer of vehicle ownership. For information, call 952-563-8719.

EARLY CHILDHOOD FAMILY CENTER INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF THE ARTS

PARENTS AND CHILDREN OF ALL AGES are invited to a multicultural celebration of diversity through art, dance, music, storytelling and food on Saturday, March 5, from 10 a.m. - 1 p.m., at Pond Center, 9600 3rd Avenue South. The festival is an opportunity to learn more about our community's unique cultures including African-American, Asian, Middle Eastern, Native American, Hispanic and European. Cost is a \$5 donation per family. The event is sponsored by the Early Childhood Family Center's Parent Advisory Council. For information, call Amanda Crombie at 952-888-0998.

TREES FOR SALE

SEE PAGE 7.



A CITY SNAPSHOT

PHOTO MURALS FOR CIVIC PLAZA

PHOTOS, BOTH CURRENT AND HISTORICAL, WILL BE incorporated in signs at Bloomington Civic Plaza in 2005. A 1931 photo on a second-floor conference room highlights great-grandchildren of Gideon H. Pond, one of the first settlers in Hennepin County. With the granary just south of the historic Pond House behind them, Wilson St. Martin, Steven St. Martin, Patricia Howe and Richard St. Martin posed in a Model T Ford owned by Hine Pond, one of Gideon's sons. In 1843, Gideon built a cabin, school and mission at what is now Pond-Dakota Mission Park, 401 E. 104th Street. *See page 5.* The St. Martin's grew up in the Gideon Pond home that was constructed in 1856. The photo is courtesy of Steven St. Martin, who still lives in Bloomington. The Pond House image is from the Bloomington Historical Society archives.

DEVELOPMENT BLOSSOMS ALONG RAIL LINE

DYNAMIC NEW CENTER FOR THE CITY STARTED

TRANSPORTATION CONTINUES TO BE A significant force driving development in Bloomington's Airport South District. Hiawatha Light Rail transit rolled into town in December with links to the Mall of America, two airport terminals and downtown Minneapolis. The Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport's multibillion dollar expansion is also underway. A new runway scheduled to open in October 2005 and additional terminal expansion is under consideration.

McGough's redevelopment takes advantage of transportation improvements by making Bloomington Central light-rail station the focal point of its 43-acre project. Mark Fabel, project manager, said McGough is examining

the economic impacts the Central Station redevelopment will have in the Airport South area.

"The way we position roads and connections to the station will encourage and incorporate retail around it," Fabel said. "Our vision for this project is to serve as a magnet and life center for a dense, mixed-use district."

The \$700 million redevelopment proposal integrates 1,100 housing units, a 200-room, full-service hotel, offices, retail and a central park in a pedestrian-friendly environment. The project, approved by the City Council in December, will be built in five phases over seven years. Phase one, scheduled to begin construction in February, consists of two 17-story condominium towers scheduled for completion in summer 2006.

Assistant City Manager Clark Arneson said the project is a significant development for Bloomington.

"McGough's three million square foot redevelopment is as important as the Mall of America from a community impact standpoint and is comparable in



McGough will create a pedestrian-friendly environment within their development similar to this streetscape in Denver.

size to the Mall's next phase," Arneson said. "It is also a unique opportunity to create a national large-scale model for transit-oriented development."

Eligible public infrastructure improvements associated with the project will be supported by tax increment financing. The City Council and Port Authority will act on a financing plan this month.

To view an animated version of the project, visit the City's Web site at www.ci.bloomington.mn.us, keywords: Bloomington Central Station.



"Reflections" is the name of the first part of the Bloomington Central Station project's first phase. Sales of the 275 condominiums have been strong. McGough proposes adding more than 800 residential units in later phases as the development progresses.

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THE FUTURE OF BLOOMINGTON

COUNCIL OUTLINES ACTION PLAN

By Mayor Gene Winstead

CLOSE YOUR EYES AND IMAGINE Bloomington in 2025. What do you see? Buildings that fit your lifestyle? A variety of activities available in an extensive park system? Improved and expanded infrastructure? Programs and services that meet your changing interests and needs?

Bloomington is never content to follow the crowd. From parks to public safety, elected officials and City employees are always asking, “Is there a better way?” As a result, our programs and community are watched and imitated by other cities.

My discussions with Port Authority President Robert Erickson resulted in a challenge to the City to review the community’s long-range goals. The process involves taking a look at what Bloomington will need in the future and how it will come together.

To move forward on significant initiatives, the City Council, Housing and Redevelopment Authority and Port Authority have proposed preparing a Strategic Action Plan. The plan will define the City’s strategy for development, redevelopment, City services, infrastructure, and fiscal strength and stability for the next 20 years.

The city will continue to thrive, in part because of its location. But it is important to consider how we will meet future challenges that include changing demographics, traffic and housing. The process is as important as the plan. It should involve the community and gather input from residents, businesses, schools and community leaders. Discussions and plan development will occur over the next two years.

Time passes quickly. It was more than 30 years ago that the concept of parallel arterial routes along both sides of I-494 was set in motion. Forward-thinking leaders and City staff envisioned the future traffic challenges Bloomington would face. Today, the key link is under construction – the bridge over I-35W at American Boulevard.

Good strategic planning is also about setting priorities among a range of excellent ideas. It is important to identify initiatives that can be implemented and are financially feasible. The initiatives won’t occur all at once, but in three- to five-year action plans. When we start setting the future direction for developing parks, programs and services and consider how they fit with the overall plan, the pieces will begin to come together.

For more information, call Community Development Director Larry Lee at 952-563-8947.

CITY OF BLOOMINGTON STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

The Strategic Action Plan will give direction for our community’s future. The final plan will:

- State a compelling City mission and vision for the long term.
- Continue Bloomington’s forward momentum to the next level of excellence.
- Articulate initiatives that will strengthen Bloomington’s distinctive character, extensive park system and sense of community.
- Identify priorities to guide the future allocation of resources.
- Include a financial plan that maintains the City’s three triple-A bond ratings.
- Specify development frameworks for the Airport South and the I-35W/98th Street district.
- Recommend a method of evaluating the strategic plan’s implementation and periodic plan updates.

TRANSPORTATION UPDATE

TRAFFIC-CALMING UPDATE PROGRAM IN REVIEW

IN FEBRUARY 2004, THE CITY COUNCIL approved a traffic-calming program and assessment policy to address traffic volume and speed in Bloomington. Last summer, a pilot program was conducted on Stanley Avenue south of 84th Street

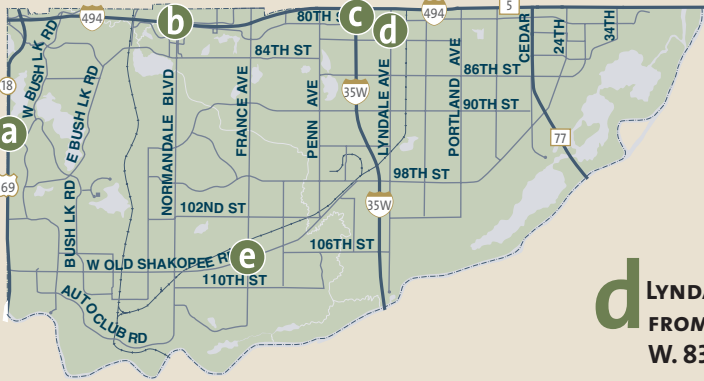
to test the impact of a speed table on a local residential street. In 2005, the City Council, Traffic and Transportation Advisory Commission and City staff will review the existing program and policy, and look at potential

modifications. For more information, visit the City’s Web site at www.ci.bloomington.mn.us, keywords: Traffic calming, or call Engineering at 952-563-4532.

ROAD CONSTRUCTION

a NEW INTERCHANGES AT TH169
Improvements began last spring to eliminate stoplights and build bridges on TH169. Pioneer Trail opened to traffic in December. Construction at Bloomington Ferry Road began last fall with completion scheduled for November 2005.

b I-494 THIRD LANE PROJECT
This spring, construction on the westbound portion of I-494 near TH100 will continue. A traffic switch to permanent roadways is scheduled for mid-summer with completion by fall 2005. A stormwater pond is being constructed on the southeast corner of 84th and Normandale to provide water quality enhancement for the I-494 corridor. Work will be completed in 2005.



c LYLE BERG BRIDGE
Construction is underway on the bridge over I-35W at 79th and 80th streets. Weather permitting, the concrete bridge beams over I-35W will be completed this winter. Construction will be ongoing through winter with the bridge deck to be poured in spring. The bridge, scheduled for completion in fall 2005, is the key link to American Boulevard. It will provide an alternative way to travel across the community and help ease traffic on I-494.

d LYNDALE AVENUE FROM I-494 TO W. 83RD STREET
All lanes and signals are in operation on Lyndale Avenue from I-494 to West 83rd Street. Installation of asphalt, landscaping, sod and seeding will begin this spring. Improvements will fit with the Lyndale Avenue bridge over I-494 scheduled for reconstruction in 2006-07.

e FRANCE AT WEST OLD SHAKOPEE
All lanes are open to traffic at France Avenue and West Old Shakopee Road. Street lighting and streetscape elements will be constructed this spring with completion by late summer.

BRIEFING

Volume 13, Number 1

The *Briefing*, published bimonthly by the City of Bloomington, is mailed to our residents and businesses. Direct comments and requests for Braille, larger print or computer disk to Communications Administrator Diann Kirby, 1800 W. Old Shakopee Rd., Bloomington MN 55431-3027; PH 952-563-8818; TTY 952-563-8740; FAX 952-563-8715;E-MAIL dkirby@ci.bloomington.mn.us.
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The City of Bloomington does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status or status with regard to public assistance in employment or the provision of services. The City of Bloomington does not discriminate on the basis of disability in the admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its programs or activities. Upon request, accommodation will be provided to allow individuals with disabilities to participate in all City of Bloomington services, programs and activities. The City has designated coordinators to facilitate compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), as required by Section 35.107 of the U.S. Department of Justice Regulations, and to coordinate compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as mandated by Section 8.53 of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Regulations. For information, contact the Human Services Division, City of Bloomington, 1800 West Old Shakopee Road, Bloomington MN 55431-3027; phone: 952-563-8700; TTY: 952-563-8740.

2005 CITY PROPERTY TAXES
COUNCIL APPROVES GENERAL FUND BUDGET

IN AN EFFORT TO MAINTAIN QUALITY services at an affordable price, the City Council adopted a General Fund Budget of \$45,069,480, an increase that has averaged 1.46 percent since 2003.

The City Council approved a tax levy for 2005 of \$36,091,897. Property taxes allocated to the General Fund have increased only 3.27 percent over the past three years, from \$27.2 million in 2003 to \$28.1 million in 2005, despite the loss of \$1.3 million in state aids in each of the three years.

Based on this tax levy, the City's portion of property taxes – approximately 33 percent – will increase from \$52.24 to \$57.14 per month for the owner of a median-priced single-family home with a 2004 market value of \$214,400. The median-valued home has increased 9.5 percent in 2004 – an \$18,700 appreciation in asset value of the investment in the home.

Conservative increase

"Including the 2005 increase, the City's total levy dollar increase averaged

2.96 percent annually over the last 12 years," explained Lori Economy-Scholler, Bloomington Chief Financial Officer. "The City's strong financial position and conservative spending pattern have helped keep tax increases low as evidenced by the City achieving the highest bond ratings from Standard and Poor's, Moody's and, most recently, Fitch credit rating agencies."

Home value increases

As a result of a strong residential property market, moderate market increases for other property types and the state's 2001 property tax reform increased overall residential property taxes for 2005. These factors also shifted the burden for the City's share of taxes from commercial/industrial and apartment properties to single-family residential properties. Due to the tax reform, the median-valued home would

have experienced a \$1.92 per month tax increase even without a levy increase for 2005. The median-valued home's total property taxes have increased at an annual rate of 4.3 percent per year for the past 10 years and, as a percentage of market value, have decreased 3.3 percent per year for the same period.

MONTHLY COST FOR CITY SERVICES

Service type*	2004	2005
Police	\$15.81	\$17.49
Public Works	11.41	14.13
Community Services	7.41	7.93
Debt and capital	4.91	6.25
Fire	7.76	6.30
Technical Services	2.14	2.24
Community Development	2.80	2.80
Monthly total for City services	\$52.24	\$57.14
Median home value	\$195,800	\$214,400

*Revised for final levy.

Responsible budgeting

The City made adjustments in 2002 through 2004 for declining local revenues. Even with the loss of state monies in 2005, the City has an ongoing commitment to provide cost-effective services while minimizing increases.

In a 2004 comparison of 15 communities in Hennepin County with more than 20,000 residents, the average household cost of services in terms of property taxes and property tax aids (when adjusted for Fiscal Disparities) showed Bloomington ranking second lowest, with the average household paying \$42.32 per month in property taxes to the City. (Comparison based on all households including single-family homes.) *See bar graph at left.* Public works, police and fire services account for about 60 percent of the monthly services for which homeowners pay. *See chart above.*

From 1995 through 2002, utility fees remained unchanged. For 2005, utility fees will increase \$1.48, or 4.8 percent per month, for an annual average increase of 1.9 percent since 1993.

GET TO KNOW YOUR
LOCAL GOVERNMENT
MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
SALARIES

"How much do the Mayor and City Council get paid to do their jobs?"

A Bloomington 3rd grader

BLOOMINGTON'S MAYOR IS PAID \$18,700 per year and spends around 30 hours per week on City business that includes attending approximately 50 Council meetings per year. The Mayor also performs ribbon cuttings, groundbreakings and dedications, speaks to business groups and organizations, visits classrooms, welcomes convention groups and serves on outside boards.

City Councilmembers are paid \$11,700 per year and spend a minimum of 15-20 hours per week on City business. The Council meets three times per month for meetings and study sessions.

EXCELLENCE IN
BUDGET
PRESENTATION
CITY RECEIVES AWARD

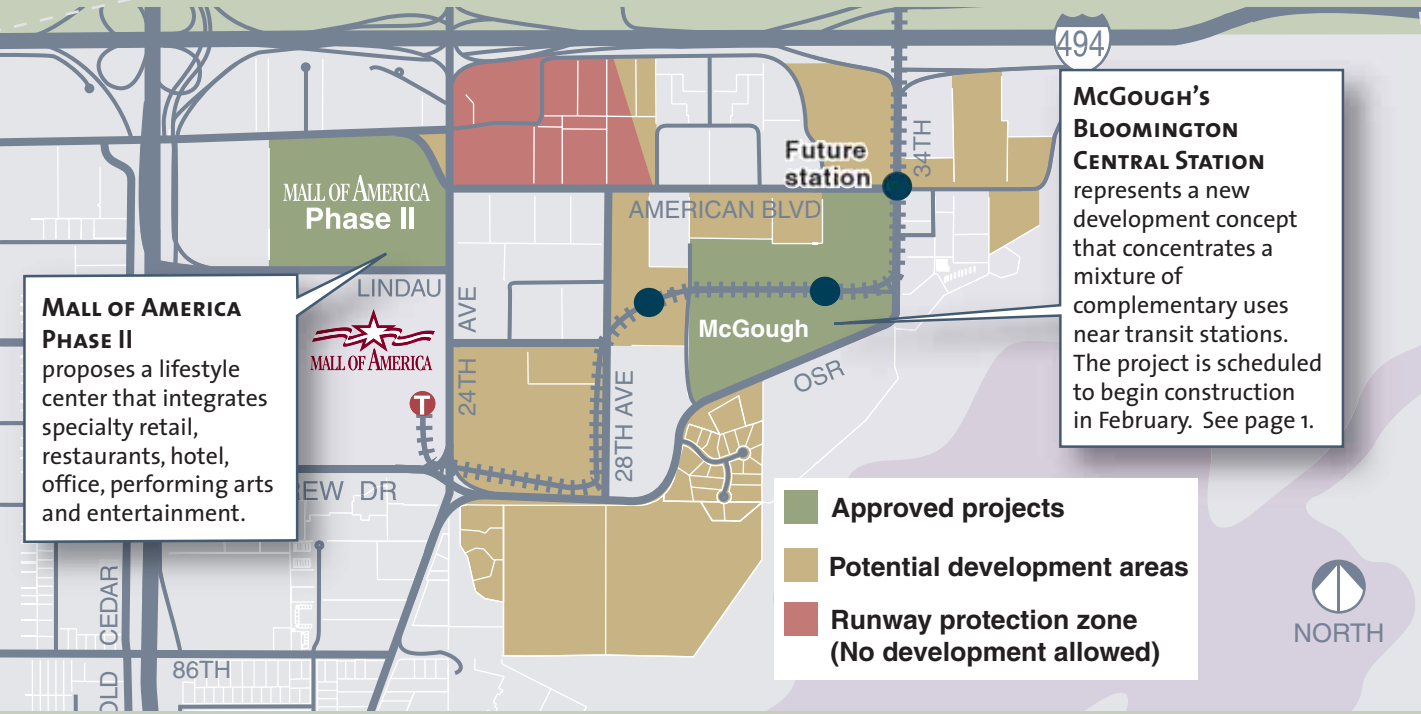
THE CITY RECEIVED THE Distinguished Budget Presentation Award for its annual budget for the fiscal year beginning January 1, 2004, from the Government Finance Officers Association. The highest form of recognition in governmental budgeting, the award represents a significant achievement. A governmental unit must publish a budget document that meets program criteria as a policy document, operations guide, financial plan and communications device. The City has received this award for the last eight years.

GROWTH POTENTIAL FOR AIRPORT SOUTH
PLANNING AND INVESTMENTS PAY OFF

OVER THE PAST 25 YEARS, PROACTIVE planning and public investment has set the stage for additional growth in the Airport South District. With direct proximity to amenities including the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport, Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge, I-494, Mall of America and Hiawatha Light Rail transit, Airport South is attracting new residents and businesses.

A comprehensive plan is in place to encourage future development that will increase employment opportunities and housing. The plan also creates opportunities to diversify and expand the City's tax base, make the area even more appealing for existing businesses and create a vibrant, new neighborhood. The plan calls for high-intensity development with high-density residential uses, creating a dynamic live-work environment and taking advantage of the transit services in the area.

The McGough and Mall of America Phase II projects constitute 70 acres of development potential. An additional 140 acres are currently available, or will be available in the near future, to continue the redevelopment that is underway in Airport South.



CONTACT PARKS AND RECREATION AT 952-563-8877 FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THESE EVENTS.

ADULT SPORTS

ADULT TENNIS DRILLS

TAUGHT BY A CERTIFIED TENNIS instructor, drills are practice sessions to improve stroke production. Facilities include locker rooms, showers, sauna, whirlpool, steam room, swimming pool, indoor running track and exercise room.

- When: Session I:
February 17 - March 24.
Session II:
March 31 - May 5.
- Times: Thursdays
Beginner 6:30 - 7:30 p.m.
Intermed. 7:30 - 8:30 p.m.
- Where: 98th Street Northwest Athletic Club.
- Cost: \$55 for six lessons.
- Limit: Eight per class; minimum four.

DAYTIME VOLLEYBALL

EXERCISE AND ENJOY VOLLEYBALL in the mornings. All games are played at the Bloomington National Guard Training and Community Center. Teams form each time you play.

- When: Tuesdays and Thursdays year-round.
- Where: National Guard Training and Community Center, 3300 W. 98th St.
- Time: 9:30 - 11:30 a.m.
- Cost: \$1.25 each session.

MEN’S, WOMEN’S AND CO-REC SOFTBALL

- When: One evening per week, starting May 3.
- Where: Valley View and Dred Scott playfields.
- Cost per team: \$535 - Recreation \$735 - Fast pitch and double header.
- Deadline: March 11.

PLAY BALL!

PARKS AND RECREATION is gearing up for another season of adult softball – a great way to exercise, meet new people, socialize with co-workers or friends and have a little competition. More than

300 teams compete throughout the summer and fall in Bloomington.

Hosted at the Dred Scott and Valley View Playfields, leagues are for adults, ages 18 and older. Divisions include men’s, men’s fast pitch, women’s and co-rec.

Leagues are formed in March and play May through July. Teams are sanctioned in both Minnesota major softball associations, the ASA and USSSA. Play ranges from competitive to recreational levels.

For more information, call Recreation Supervisor Jason Hicks at 952-563-8880 or e-mail jhicks@ci.bloomington.mn.us.

GET ACTIVE

YOUTH ACTIVITIES

HEALTHY KIDS ARE ACTIVE KIDS



BLOOMINGTON LOVES ITS KIDS CARNIVAL

- When: Saturday, February 19, 12:30 - 3 p.m.
- Where: Northwestern Health Sciences University, 84th and Penn Ave.
- GAMES, EXHIBITS, POLICE AND FIRE DEMONSTRATIONS, FOOD AND ENTERTAINMENT are featured at this fun, free event for kids and families. Please bring a food item for the VEAP food shelf.

SPRING EGG HUNT

FOR CHILDREN, AGES 8 AND UNDER

- When: Saturday, March 26, 11 a.m.
- Where: Northwestern Health Sciences University, 84th and Penn Ave.
- Time: Activities begin 9:30 a.m., hunt 11 a.m.
- ENJOY SNACKS, GAMES, PHOTOS WITH THE BUNNY, ENTERTAINMENT AND more. This “eggs”traordinary annual event is sponsored by Parks and Recreation, the Bloomington Breakfast Optimist Club and Northwestern Health Sciences University.



SUMMER SPECTRUM

SUPER SIGN-UP SATURDAY!

- When: Saturday, April 16.
- Time: 9 - 11 a.m.
- Where: Bloomington Civic Plaza, 1800 W. Old Shakopee Rd.
- TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THIS GREAT OPPORTUNITY TO ASK questions, organize your child’s summer and register in one place. Summer Spectrum, an eight-week collaborative program between Bloomington Parks and Recreation, Community Education and the Bloomington Art Center, offers summer activities for youth, complete with transportation and child care. Look for more information on all of the Summer Spectrum programs when the brochure is delivered in late March. For more information, call Parks and Recreation or visit www.ci.bloomington.mn.us, keyword: Spectrum.

GALAXY YOUTH CENTER

- Where: Valley View Middle School, 8900 Portland Ave.
- Hours: Monday - Friday 2:20 - 6 p.m.
Bus home: 4:30 p.m., 5:30 p.m.
- Where: Oak Grove Middle School, 1300 W. 106th St.
Olson Middle School, 4551 W. 102nd St.
- Hours: Monday – Friday 2:20 - 5 p.m.
Bus home: 4:30 p.m.
- Cost: \$25 per quarter or \$0.50 daily.

THE SKY’S THE LIMIT FOR YOUTH, GRADES 6 THROUGH 8, AT GALAXY YOUTH CENTERS. Located in all three middle schools, the centers provide opportunities to empower youth through recreation, leadership, socialization, learning and service activities.

Sign up for the Youth Power program which empowers youth to make healthy choices for their lives, now and in the future. Topics include the negative impacts of drug and alcohol use, body image, how to respect yourself and others and healthy versus toxic relationships. This program is held on Mondays at Valley View, Tuesdays at Oak Grove and Wednesdays at Olson. For information, call 952-681-5807.



THIS FRIENDLY COMPETITION CHALLENGES employees to shape up! Bloomington worksite coordinators receive special training and all materials needed to participate in the contest that runs from April 25 to June 5. Every week, employees record points for aerobic, strength-training and flexibility activities. Trophies are

awarded to the companies with the most points per employee. Sponsored by Parks and Recreation, this is a great way to introduce fitness, team spirit and a little fun into your workplace. Call Diane Moe in Parks and Recreation for more information and sign up by April 15.



THREE RIVERS PARK DISTRICT

RICHARDSON NATURE CENTER

Hyland Lake Park Reserve
8737 East Bush Lake Road
For information, call 763-559-6700.

CANDLELIGHT AND CHOCOLATE

Bring your sweetheart for a woodland stroll on **Saturday, February 12, 6 - 9-30 p.m.** Enjoy a dessert buffet, fire and music. Reservations by February 11. Cost is \$12 patrons; \$15 regular.

WALK WHEN THE MOON IS FULL – RACCOON MOON

Explore the trails, trees and skies at night for signs of animal activity on **Wednesday, February 23, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.** Cost is \$3.

GIFTS OF THE MAPLE

Discover the springtime tradition of making maple syrup on **Sundays, March 6 - 20, 3 - 4 p.m.**

EGG TRAIL AND RABBIT HABITS

Search for wooden eggs and uncover rabbit habit facts on **Friday, March 25, 10 a.m. - 2:45 p.m.** See live animals that hatch from eggs, match birds with their nests, create crafts and enjoy treats. Reservations required. Cost is \$5, ages 3 and older.



ADAPTIVE RECREATION AND LEARNING Exchange (AR&LE) offers recreational, leisure and community education programs that are specifically designed to meet the needs of people with disabilities in the cities of Bloomington, Eden Prairie, Edina and Richfield. For information, call Parks and Recreation or visit www.ci.bloomington.mn.us, keywords: Adaptive Recreation.

Inclusion services provided

Under the direction of the Assistant Parks and Recreation Manager, inclusion services allow participants with disabilities to fully participate in Parks and Recreation programs. For more information, call Parks and Recreation or e-mail parksrec@ci.bloomington.mn.us.

BLOOMINGTON ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION (BAA)

BAA OFFERS BASEBALL AND softball programs for boys and girls, age 5 through 12, including a mini-mite program for kids, age 5. For information on programs, call the BAA Information Line at 952-888-0807 or visit www.baaonline.org.

YOUTH SPORTS



CULTURE AND HISTORY

CENTER FOR THE ARTS

LOCATED IN BLOOMINGTON CIVIC PLAZA AT THE CORNER OF WEST 98TH STREET AND OLD SHAKOPEE Road, the Center for the Arts is a first-class facility housing eight arts organizations. For facility information, call 952-563-8881. For events, call 952-563-8587.

CIVIC PLAZA LOBBY

BLOOMINGTON WRITERS’ FESTIVAL A CELEBRATION OF THE LITERARY ARTS

The Bloomington Art Center presents the 2nd Annual Bloomington Writers’ Festival, **Saturday, March 5, 11:45 a.m. - 4 p.m.** Admission is \$5; free for children under 12. For information, call 952-835-5227.

ANNUAL FUNDRAISER



The Bloomington Fine Arts Council presents the 10th annual Taste of Chocolate dessert competition and fundraising event on **Sunday, March 20, 1 - 5 p.m.** Tickets are \$20 advance; \$25 door. For information, visit www.tasteofchocolate.org or call 952-563-8567.

SCHNEIDER THEATER

BLOOMINGTON CIVIC THEATRE



Performances are **Thursdays - Saturdays, 7:30 p.m., Sundays, 2 p.m., through February 20.** Tickets are \$18 students/groups; \$21 seniors and \$24 adults. For more information, visit www.bloomintoncivictheatre.org or call 952-563-8575.

THURSDAY MUSICAL

The Thursday Morning Artist Series classical music concerts are performed on **Thursdays, February 10 and 17, March 10 and 31, April 7, 10:30 a.m.** Tickets are \$10 adults; \$6 students. Season tickets are \$55, \$45 for seniors. For more information, call 612-333-0313 or visit www.thursdaymusical.com.

MEDALIST CONCERT BAND IN CELEBRATION OF LOVE

Professor Jerry Luckhardt will direct “All the Things You Are” on **Monday, February 14, 7:30 p.m.** Solos by Lee Dummer and Carolyn Pratt. For reservations, call 952-563-8583. Tickets are \$10 adults; \$8 seniors and students; free for children under 10.

EXHIBITIONS

BLOOMINGTON ART CENTER (BAC)

952-563-4777

INEZ GREENBERG GALLERY

Running through **February 18, Contradictions: Hidden Truths** features artists Michael Bernstein, Jim Davis, Wayne Roosa and Kenneth Steinbach

From **February 25 - April 1, Fragment** features artist Rollin Alm. The opening reception will be Friday, February 25, 6 - 8 p.m.

ATRIUM GALLERY, SECOND FLOOR

Running through **March 4, Geography of Longing** features artist Susan Armington.

Bela Petheo: Themes and Variations, 1956 - 2004, A Selection runs **March 10 - April 22.** Meet the artist on Friday, April 8, from 6 - 8 p.m.

GALLERY HOURS

Monday - Friday	8 a.m. - 10 p.m.
Saturday	9 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Sunday	1 p.m. - 10 p.m.



“In the Mist III,” oil by Rollin Alm

BLACK BOX THEATER

DIRTY WORK AT THE CROSSROADS OR TEMPTED, TRIED AND TRUE

A gay nineties melodrama in three acts will be performed by the Gallery Players, **Friday - Saturday, February 18 - 26, March 4 - 5*, 7:30 p.m., and Sundays, February 20 - 27, March 6, 2 p.m.** Tickets are \$7.

*ASL interpreted.

NOTE-ABLE SINGERS UPCOMING CONCERTS

Join us on **Sunday, March 20**, at Taste of Chocolate at Bloomington Civic Plaza, 1800 West Old Shakopee Road and **Saturday, April 30**, at 12:30 p.m., at the Richfield Community Center, 7000 Nicollet Avenue South, Richfield.



MULTIMEDIA DANCE PERFORMANCE SWING A CLUB: FACING CANCER

This multimedia dance piece that brings to life themes of struggle, support and letting go will be performed **Friday - Saturday, March 18 - 19, 7:30 p.m.** Performance is free. Donations for American Cancer Society accepted.



CONTINENTAL BALLET COMPANY SLEEPING BEAUTY

Performances are **Fridays, April 15 - 22, 7:30 p.m., and Saturdays - Sundays, April 16 - 24, 3 p.m.** Tickets are \$17 adults; \$14 senior citizens/students; \$8 for children under age 13. For more information, call 952-563-8562.



GIDEON H. POND HOUSE

POND-DAKOTA MISSION PARK 401 E. 104TH ST.

POND-DAKOTA MISSION PARK IS THE site of the Gideon Pond House that was constructed in 1856. Listed on both the National and Minnesota Registers of Historic Places, the restored Federal-style, two-story brick house is open for tours on the third Sunday of each month from 1:30 - 4 p.m. Admission is free. Tours are available by appointment.

The Pond-Dakota Mission Park offers miles of hiking and mountain-biking trails, wildlife that live along the river, native and non-native plant species, and rich historical and cultural perspectives.

OPEN HOUSE ACTIVITIES

Visit the Pond-Dakota Mission Park on the following Sundays, from 1:30 - 4 p.m., and learn more about your community’s heritage. Join an experienced guide on a tour of the valley trails at 1:30 and 3:30 p.m. For more information call 952-563-8693.



PICTORIAL HISTORY OF THE DAKOTA UPRISING OF 1862

Minnesota historian Curtis Dahlin lectures on the 1862 Dakota Uprising. Dahlin is the author of a new book that contains more than 275 photographs, drawings and paintings of the people and events involved in the Dakota conflict.

Date: Sunday, March 6.
Time: 2 - 3:30 p.m.

MAPLE SYRUP MAKING

Learn to make maple syrup the traditional way with Jim and Chris Scanlon. Enjoy demonstrations on tapping trees for sap and the production of maple sugar.

Date: Sunday, March 20.
Time: 2 - 3:30 p.m.



PROGRAMS
YOU CAN USE

LOCATED AT 9801 PENN AVENUE SOUTH, CREEKSIDE Community Center houses the Human Services’ Senior Program. For information, call the Human Services Information Line at 952-563-4957 V/TTY.

FREE TAX PREPARATION
ASSISTANCE

FREE INCOME TAX assistance is available at Creekside on a first-come, first-served basis to individuals who meet income-qualifying guidelines. Tax assistance includes the following programs:



ACCOUNTABILITY MINNESOTA

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH FAMILINK-BLOOMINGTON, AccountAbility Minnesota will provide tax assistance to individuals with incomes of \$25,000 or less, and families with incomes of \$35,000 or less.

When: Mondays, February 7 - April 11 (except February 21).
Tuesdays, February 1 - April 12.

Time: 6 - 9 p.m.

When: Saturdays, February 5 - April 9.

Time: 9 a.m. - noon.

AARP Tax-Aide

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE CITY OF BLOOMINGTON, AARP Tax-Aide will provide free tax preparation services to middle- and low-income taxpayers, with special attention to those age 60 and older. The AARP Tax-Aide program prepares personal income tax returns including the 1040, 1040A and 1040EZ. Taxpayers with complex tax returns are advised to seek paid tax assistance.

When: Wednesdays and Thursdays, February 2 - April 14.

Time: 9 a.m. - noon.

TAX FORMS AVAILABLE AT CREEKSIDE
Federal tax forms that can be photocopied are available at Creekside.

WANTED:
YOUR OLD CELL PHONE

TELECOM PIONEERS, A GROUP OF VOLUNTEERS FROM Qwest, will clear all pre-programmed numbers and refurbish your donated cell phone to make it 911 accessible for older adults and individuals with medical conditions or disabilities. Drop off cell phones in working order, including the wall chargers, at Creekside. Cell phones will be distributed on Saturday, March 12. Bloomington residents who do not own cell phones, and are ages 55 or older or have medical conditions or disabilities, are eligible to register for free cell phones refurbished to access 911 exclusively. For more information, call the Information Line.

FAMILINK RESOURCE CENTER
YOUR BRIDGE TO COMMUNITY RESOURCES

QUESTIONS RELATED TO LEGAL ISSUES, HOUSING options, financial assistance, counseling or other issues? FamLink Resource Center’s trained staff can connect you to community resources and services. Call 952-884-0444 or visit Creekside, Monday - Friday, from 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

HEALTH UPDATES



EMERGENCY AND
COMMUNITY HEALTH
OUTREACH (ECHO)
TELEVISION PROGRAMS THAT
SERVE MANY CULTURES

ECHO TV IS A NEW TELEVISION PROGRAM that offers public health advisories and emergency alerts in six languages, and allows people to get information about their health in ways that respect their culture. The program reaches viewers who speak Hmong, Khmer, Lao, Somali, Spanish and Vietnamese and airs on Twin Cities Public Television Channel 17. For a schedule of topics, visit www.ci.bloomington.mn.us, keyword: ECHO, or call 952-563-8904.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE
LOCAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS
NEEDED AS VOLUNTEERS

THE MEDICAL RESERVE CORPS MOBILIZES and coordinates local volunteers to respond to emergencies. Volunteer health professionals in Hennepin County are currently being recruited to assist public health and medical staff in the event of a major medical emergency, natural disaster, public health crisis or a mass vaccination clinic. Duties could include answering hotline calls, dispensing antibiotics, giving vaccinations and providing medical care. For more information, call the Medical Reserve Corps at 952-351-5234 or visit www.mrc-hennepin.org.

SMOKE-FREE WORKPLACES
PHASE II EFFECTIVE NEXT MONTH

TO ENSURE A SMOKE-FREE ENVIRONMENT FOR BLOOMINGTON employees and customers, the City Council passed a smoke-free workplace ordinance last July. Phase one of the ordinance was effective September 1, 2004, and included most workplaces and public places. Phase two of the smoking ban takes effect on March 31, 2005, and includes establishments with on-sale liquor, wine or 3.2 beer licenses or permits, or charitable gambling licenses or permits. Hennepin County’s smoking ban also takes effect on March 31 and includes restaurants, bars and other places that serve food.

The ordinance prohibits smoking in indoor public places and workplaces and within 25 feet of entrances, exits, open windows and ventilation intakes to public places and workplaces. It also requires that at least one-half of the seating capacity of outdoor restaurant patios be designated as non-smoking areas.

Smoking in private residences, motor vehicles, designated hotel-motel sleeping rooms, and during Indian spiritual rituals or cultural ceremonies is allowed under state law and is not affected by the City’s ordinance.

For information, visit www.ci.bloomington.mn.us, keywords: Smoking ordinance, or call Karen Zeleznak at 952-563-8900.

COVER YOUR COUGH
TIPS FOR STAYING HEALTHY



EVEN IF YOU WERE UNABLE TO GET A FLU shot, there are other preventative steps you can take to stay healthy this season.

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze and dispose of the tissue.
- Cough or sneeze into your sleeve if you don’t have a tissue.

- Clean your hands with soap and warm water or an alcohol-based hand cleaner.
- With a household cleaner, regularly clean surfaces that are touched or handled frequently including doorknobs, water faucets, refrigerator handles and telephones.
- If you get the flu, or any respiratory illness, avoid exposing others. Stay home from work or school.
- Eat right, get plenty of rest and exercise.
- Ask your doctor about the pneumococcal pneumonia vaccination – a common and potentially serious complication of the flu – especially if you’re age 65 or older.

COMMUNITY EVENTS



VALENTINE
TEA AND STORYTIME
ALL AGES INVITED

INVITE YOUR CHILDREN, GRANDCHILDREN, friends and neighbors or come on your own to a special event celebrating families and love. Enjoy tea, juice and refreshments. Human Services and Oxboro Library sponsor this free event.

When: Saturday, February 12.

Time: 10:30 a.m.

Location: Oxboro Library, 8801 Portland Ave. S.

TASTE OF JAPAN
AN EVENING OF JAPANESE CULTURE

JOIN THE BLOOMINGTON SISTER CITY ORGANIZATION FOR AN EVENING of food, fun and festivities that will include stories of travel to Izumi City, Japan, cultural interactive activities, a silent auction, entertainment and a Japanese dinner. Taste of Japan will be held on Saturday, March 12, from 4 - 9 p.m. at Bloomington Civic Plaza, 1800 West Old Shakopee Road. For more information, call 952-563-8735; 952-563-8740 TTY.





GOOD REASONS TO CLEAN

2005 CITYWIDE GARAGE SALES

HUMAN SERVICES PRESENTS THE 6TH ANNUAL CITYWIDE GARAGE SALES to be held Thursday - Saturday, June 2 - 4. Watch for details in the April Briefing. For more information, call Creekside Community Center at 952-563-4957 V/TTY.

SPRING 2005 CURBSIDE CLEANUP

COLLECTION DATES

Location	Regular trash day is:	2005 Curbside pickup is Saturday:
West of Normandale	Friday	April 16
France to Normandale	Thursday	April 23
Penn to France	Wednesday	April 30
Portland to Penn	Tuesday	May 7
East of Portland	Monday	May 21



THE MORE YOU KNOW

ENERGY SAVINGS TIP

UNPLUG APPLIANCES AND ALSO SAVE MONEY

MARY WONDERED WHY A TENANT’S ELECTRIC BILL WAS so much less than her other tenants’ bills. She discovered the energy-saving tenants were unplugging many appliances when they were out of town. Why the savings? Doesn’t off mean off? Even when you turn off electric appliances, they use energy. Many remain on standby mode and leak power. The chart to the right shows the typical savings you could get per year by simply unplugging an appliance when it’s not in use.

Cost is calculated at a rate of 10¢ per kilowatt:

Electrical device	Yearly cost
27-inch color TV	\$11.44
VCR	11.40
Microwave	2.40
Cordless telephone	3.60
Rechargeable flashlight	9.30
Computer modem	3.60

Source: *In Balance*, newsletter published by the Center for a New American Dream.

SAVE A TREE
RECYCLE YOUR PAPER

THANKS TO INNOVATIVE technology, more of your paper products can be recycled. Each year, Minnesotans recycle 800,000 tons of paper, but another 750,000 tons of recyclable paper is thrown in the trash. Recycling one ton of paper saves 17 mature trees, 7,000 gallons of water, 380 gallons of oil and enough energy to heat a home for six months.

PLANT A TREE IN YOUR YARD
CITY TREE SALE THIS SPRING

EACH YEAR, THE CITY PLANTS TREES IN PARKS and other public areas to ensure that Bloomington’s urban forest continues to be a community treasure. In 2004, 1,850 diseased elm and oak trees, many located on residential properties, were marked for removal. To increase the number of trees on private properties, Park Maintenance will hold a public tree sale this spring.

Do recycle magazines, junk mail, envelopes, catalogs, office paper, newspapers, cereal and other dry food boxes, phone books and corrugated cardboard.

Do not recycle freezer or refrigerator boxes, pizza boxes, egg cartons, paper towels or tissue products, paper cups, plates or napkins.

Approximately 300 trees will be for sale. Orders will be filled on a first-come, first-served basis. To purchase a tree, fill out and mail the form below, along with a check payable to “City of Bloomington.” To download a form, visit www.ci.bloomington.mn.us, keywords: Tree sale.



TREE ORDER FORM

Bloomington residents only. Bare root trees – one and a quarter inch to two inches in diameter.

Name _____ Phone _____

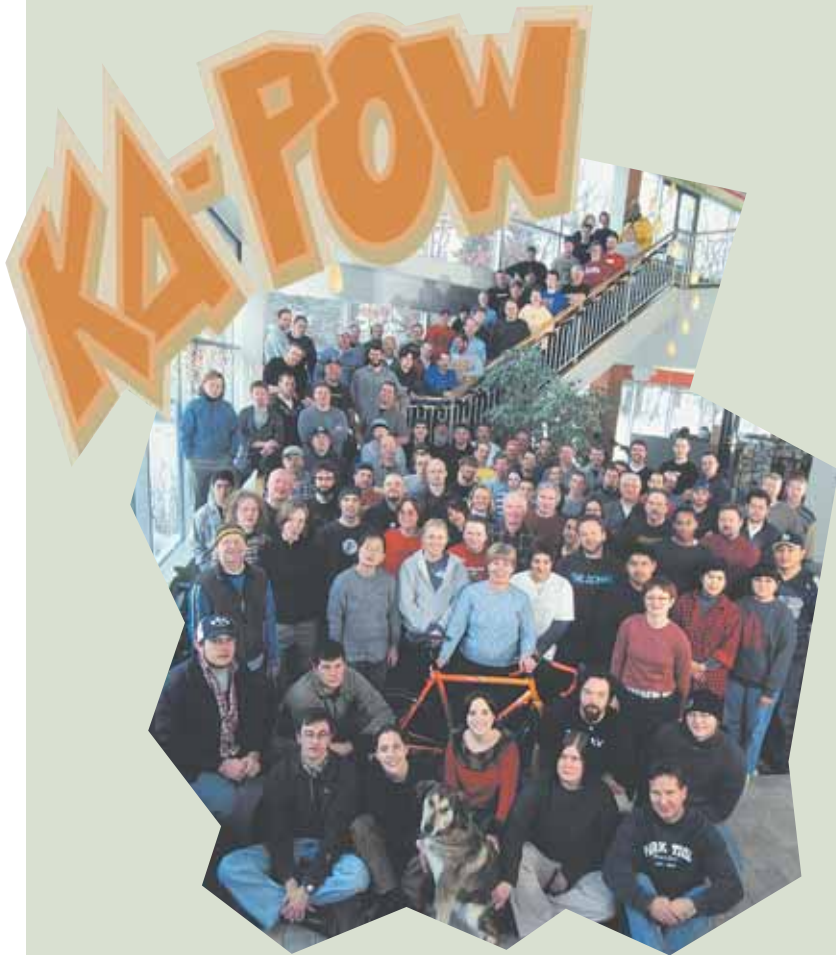
Address _____

Fill in the number of each tree type desired.
Maximum 5 trees total per household, \$50 each.
Check must accompany order.

___ Autumn Blaze Maple ___ Hackberry
___ Northwoods Rubrum (Red) Maple
Total trees ___ X \$50 ea. = _____ Total cost

Pick up trees at 1800 West Old Shakopee Road on Saturday, May 7, 9 a.m. - noon.
Send check and form to City of Bloomington, Park Maintenance, 1800 West Old Shakopee Road,
Bloomington MN 55431-3027.

Earth Action Heroes protect the planet. Whether it’s saving energy or guarding Bloomington’s precious natural resources, these individuals are making a difference. Here are your neighbors in action ...



EARTH ACTION HEROES
RE: CYCLERS

TRAFFIC CONGESTION. HONK IF YOU DON’T LIKE IT. BUILDING MORE roads and improving infrastructure may be one solution, but it’s expensive. The cost is also personal because air pollution and stress from increased traffic can affect your health. However, there’s another alternative – decreasing the demand. That is, getting more vehicles off the road. When it comes to being part of the solution, one Bloomington-based company really gets in gear.

Quality Bicycle Products (QBP) believes in alternatives to driving solo. As the world’s largest independent distributor of bicycle products, their business is promoting bicycle use and they make it easy for their employees to bike to work.

The company provides incentives including extra pay, indoor bicycle storage, repair facilities, showers, lockers and catering lunch several times per week to reduce the need to travel. At peak production, 270 employees work at QBP and, typically, almost half of the office participate in regular bike-to-work days.

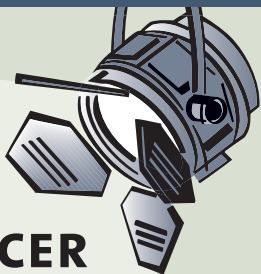
“We work hard at nurturing a bike culture,” said QBP’s Bicycle Industry Advocate Gary Sjoquist. “We take our role as a corporate citizen seriously and want to set an example in our industry and in our community. That’s why we started the Bike-to-Work Program.”

Recognized by the City Council and I-494 Commuter Services for exemplary efforts in combating congestion, QBP received the Metro Commuter Services Commuter Choice Award. Most recently, the company was designated as one of the “Best Workplaces for Commuters” by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Realizing that bicycle commuting is not an option for everyone, QBP encourages employees to use mass transit or carpool. The company assists employees in identifying commuting options by hosting on-site commuter fairs and displaying commuting options in the lunchroom. As the company parking lot grows due to expansion, GBP will also implement preferential parking spaces for carpoolers.

The next time you’re sitting in traffic, think about what you can do to improve your health, protect the environment and save money. Is it time for a bike tune-up? QBP will donate and deliver an outdoor bicycle rack to any company in the Twin Cities willing to use Commuter Services to expand commuting options. For more information on commuting options, visit www.metrocommuterservices.org/index.asp.





PRODUCER SPOTLIGHT
A GLIMPSE OF A DAY IN RENITA’S WORLD



TELEVISION PRODUCER RENITA ANSWERS questions about “Renita’s World” that airs on Bloomington Community Access Television (BCAT), Mondays and Wednesdays at 9:30 p.m. and Tuesdays and Thursdays at 9:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. on Channel 16.

“Renita’s World” is a talk show. We play music, discuss current events, have guests and I do impersonations – so there’s some comedy.

There aren’t any television shows by and about people with special needs. I chose to make this show so that people with special needs can see who I am.

The best thing about community cable access television is that it gives people a chance to produce their own programming. I had no previous experience in television production when I started.

By watching my program, I hope audiences will learn more about people with special needs. To my fans I would like to say, hi and welcome. I hope you’re enjoying the show.

I like BCAT’s facility because it’s clean and big and easy to get around. My favorite equipment is the studio cameras – they’re cool to operate.

One thing most people may not know about me? I’m a celebrity who has a special need.

Would you like to produce your own television show? If you live or work in Bloomington, you can use the facility. For more information, visit BCAT at www.ci.bloomington.mn.us, keyword: BCAT, or call Amanda Taylor at 952-563-4980.

BUILDING AND RENEWING OUR COMMUNITY
ONE SERVICE AT A TIME

DO SOMETHING CONSTRUCTIVE
HOME IMPROVEMENT LOANS AVAILABLE FROM HRA

THE BLOOMINGTON HOUSING AND Redevelopment Authority (HRA) is now accepting applications for its Home Improvement Deferred Loan Program.

Loans of up to \$30,000 are available to Bloomington homeowners. There are no monthly payments. Repayment occurs when the home is sold, transferred or conveyed. Interest is charged at a simple 5 percent per year for the first 10 years based on the original loan amount.

A Lead Risk Assessment is required for all homes built before 1978.

Loans are offered to help maintain the condition of housing and neighborhoods in the city. Applications



are ranked and processed according to need. Depending on your ranking, it may take up to 10 months before your application is processed.

To apply for a Home Improvement Deferred Loan, you must have sufficient equity in your home to cover the amount of the loan.

Deadline

Loan applications will be accepted at the HRA office in Bloomington Civic Plaza, 1800 West Old Shakopee Road, until Friday, March 4. For more information or to receive an application, call 952-563-8941.

INCOME GUIDELINES

Persons in household*	Maximum gross income**
1	\$40,250
2	\$46,000
3	\$51,750
4	\$57,500
5	\$62,100
6	\$66,700
7	\$71,300
8 or more	\$75,900

* Includes all residents of household, related and unrelated, including renters.

** Subject to change.

ELIGIBLE REPAIRS: Replacement of roofs, electrical and plumbing systems, gutters, windows, doors, insulation, siding, soffits and fascia, exterior painting, and foundation, sidewalk or step repairs.

INELIGIBLE REPAIRS: Decorating, additions, finishing basements, remodeling and garage construction. Homeowner labor will no longer be permitted, due to federal lead paint regulations.

FIRE HYDRANT INSPECTIONS ENTER THE 21ST CENTURY
NEW TOOL IMPROVES OPERATOR EFFICIENCY

TWICE A YEAR, THE CITY’S UTILITIES Division inspects approximately 5,000 public and private water hydrants. Inspections are performed in compliance with the American Water Works Association standards to ensure that hydrants will perform properly and reliably in an emergency.

Many factors can affect a hydrant’s overall performance, including vandalism, accidental damage, wear and tear, and mechanical malfunction. Each year, hundreds of paper checklist forms are provided to inspection crews to note each hydrant’s condition. Crews complete the reports in the field and then return to the office for time-consuming data entry.

Recently, Utilities operators began using a new field computer when they perform hydrant inspections. The handheld device can hold thousands of records and, at the end of the day, the inspection data is loaded into a computer and analyzed. The new computer system saves time, reduces errors and enables staff to better analyze the condition of the hydrant and make repairs and upgrades where needed.

Utility Operator Doris VanderEyk uses a palm-sized computer to record hydrant inspection data.



**ADOPT A WATER HYDRANT
KEEP IT CLEAR OF SNOW**

Do a good deed for your neighbors and yourself this winter by clearing away snow from your water hydrant. This will provide quick access for firefighters and water maintenance workers in case of an emergency.



Viki, left, and Tom Plant, right, at the swearing-in ceremony in December.

WHEN OFFICER ANDREW PLANT WAS sworn into office in December, it marked the first time a father and son have served at the same time on the Bloomington police force. His father, Sergeant Tom Plant, has been with the department for 28 years.

**PROTECT YOUR INVESTMENT
KEEP STORM WATER OUT OF THE SEWER SYSTEM**

DO YOU HAVE A FOUNDATION DRAINAGE system in which water flows to a sump? If the water is pumped out of the basement, it should be directed at least ten feet away from your home or business. This will ensure that water does not return to the structure, creating foundation drainage problems.

State and City plumbing codes prohibit sump pumps from discharging water into laundry tubs, floor drains or any other sanitary sewer drain. Sanitary sewers cannot accept storm water because of their size. Any additional flow into these pipes may result in

sewage backing up into homes and businesses.

Because all sewage is metered by the Metropolitan Council Environmental Services, discharging water into the sanitary sewer increases utility costs that are then passed on to the City as treatment fees. Keeping storm water out of the sewer system reduces costs, saving you money in fees and sewer backup expenses.

For more information, call Tim Kampa at 952-563-8777.